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HISTORY OF ASTORIA RAILROAD

By Leslie M. Scott

A railroad, speeding ahead of the drifting Columbia River to the sea, or gliding back up its toilsome currents, was a dream of nearly half a century ere it came true. The canoe of Indians, explorers and fur traders, the row-boat of pioneer settlers, were relegated in 1850 by the river steamboat. Right afterward came the railroad idea—but not the railroad for yet many a waiting year.

It seems natural enough now that the steam locomotive should follow the river to the ocean; one may wonder at the long delay. But railroads, like each other pioneer improvement in Oregon, grew slowly—from their beginnings in 1868-9; the down-Columbia line reached Goble not until 1883; and halted there fifteen years before going on to Astoria, fifty-eight miles further.

These latter years were restive ones for that city by the sea. Its efforts were persistent; its offerings to railroad builders continuous. It wished to be the seaport and railroad terminus of the Columbia River Basin—to win that place from Portland. It finally got the railroad, but has not realized the other ambition. Its success in winning this much was the result of organized self-help. As an example of self-dependence and public achievement the completion of this railroad deserves to go down in the annals of things highly praiseworthy in Oregon. The people of Astoria, knowing from repeated failures that they must help themselves, offered a land prize, and enlarged

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the prize as one would-be builder succeeded another, until finally A. B. Hammond appeared, for whom the land bounty was swelled to a value—though problematical and speculative—moderately estimated at between $500,000 and $1,000,000. The only other sacrifice that has ever equaled this in our commonwealth was probably the $100,000 gift from Portland citizens to Ben Holladay in 1870, for the "West Side" railroad—a tremendous public achievement for the time. Like the Portland citizens of 1870, the Astoria citizens were determined and put forth tremendous effort.

The Astoria project took many forms and suffered many vicissitudes; only brief outline can be given here; probably such outline is better because of wearisome detail otherwise. Oregon's biggest railroad men considered the project—Joseph Gaston, Ben Holladay, Henry Villard, C. P. Huntington, Wm. Reid. It may aid the memory to divide the promotion period into two parts—the one leading up to 1887, when Astoria adopted the self-help or bonus plan; the other continuing the project until the "last spike" (April 3, 1898), or the first "through train" (May 16, 1898.)

I.

Talk of the "Astoria railroad" started in 1853, at the time of the surveys then made by Governor I. I. Stevens, of Washington Territory, for the Northern Pacific. Although Governor Stevens' survey crossed the Cascade Mountains to Puget Sound, it was considered likely that the proposed road would follow the Columbia River. For many years afterward, this choice was undetermined. If the Columbia route, what more natural than a terminus at Astoria, next door to the sea, the oldest American settlement on the Pacific Coast? Why not there the great mart of the Columbia Basin? This, at least, in the thoughts of Clatsop citizens.

That Governor Stevens' survey stimulated railroad schemes in Oregon is seen in the railroad acts of the Territorial Legislature of Oregon in 1853-4. These were the beginnings of the subject in this commonwealth. Evidently the Oregon pro-

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jects then initiated aimed to connect directly or indirectly with the Northern Pacific transcontinental line. The Oregon Legislature in 1853-4 incorporated four railroad companies: (1) The Willamette Valley Railroad, Portland to Corvallis, $1,000,000 capital (special laws 1854, p. 87; (2) The Oregon & California Railroad—not that of 1870 of the same name—Eugene to a point below Oregon City, $4,000,000 capital (ibid p. 81); (3) Cincinnati Railroad, Polk County, $250,000 capital (ibid p. 27); (4) Clackamas Railroad, Canemah to point below Oregon City, $400,000 capital (ibid p. 58.)

None of the companies materialized, nor for yet four years (1858) did Astoria and Clatsop County residents initiate a railroad project. They were thinking the matter over, however, as actively as their brethren in Portland, Oregon City, Salem and Eugene. Meanwhile they were trying to carry out wagon road plans between Clatsop County and Tualatin. The Legislatures of 1847, 1850, 1851, 1852 and 1853 appointed commissions to locate such a road. The Legislature of 1866 awarded to the Astoria and Tillamook Road Company, any grant of land that Congress would offer for a military wagon road to Astoria, but Congress never made the grant. The Legislature of 1872 appropriated $20,000 for the wagon road, and the Legislature of 1889 appropriated $15,000 for the same purpose. In 1855-58 Congress took up the project for a military wagon road from Salem to Astoria through the Coast Range, and appropriated $70,000 therefor, but the highway was never finished and was not traversed its entire length, between Forest Grove and Astoria, until 1895, by Rev. William Travis (Oregonian, July 31, 1900). These wagon road plans suggested a route for a railroad and many projects for a line were attempted, until in 1894 Mr. Hammond adopted the other route—along the Columbia, via Goble. It is to be expected that in the future a railroad will follow the older surveys, via upper Nehalem, through the most prolific timber in America.

Various localities in Oregon obtained from the Legislature in the 50s incorporation of railroad companies; so in 1858

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it came the turn of Clatsop County to urge, for a charter, the Astoria & Willamette Valley Railroad, $5,000,000 capital, between Eugene and Astoria (special laws 1858, p. 24). The incorporators numbered 70 persons, representing Clatsop and Willamette Valley counties. It need not be added that this enterprise was premature; the Territory could not build such a road; the capitalization, however necessary, was excessive amid pioneer conditions; nothing came of the company. Next appearance of the idea occurred in 1864, when the Legislature pledged a loan of $200,000 for 100 miles of railroad in Willamette Valley (Session Laws, p. 77). At this time a subsidy bill was in Congress to aid a railroad from a connection with the Central Pacific, then building, through California and Oregon to the Columbia River. Such a bill passed Congress in 1866 (Act of July 25, 1866); out of this act grew the Oregon Central and the Oregon & California Railroad, and, four years later, a second similar act (May 4, 1870), providing a land bounty for a railroad from Portland to McMinnville and Astoria.

In the continuity of this early railroad development of Oregon, we see the Astoria project ever present. Owing to the lethargy of the Northern Pacific (construction not begun until 1870; opened to Portland not until 1883). Oregon directed its hopes for first transcontinental connections toward the Union Pacific and Central Pacific (opened to California in 1869). In 1863 the people of Oregon were delighted to hear that surveys toward Oregon were progressing up Sacramento Valley under Simon G. Elliott, of Marysville, Cal.; George H. Belden and Charles Barry. Next year the surveys continued to Portland under Barry. In that same year the Oregon Legislature offered a $200,000 loan for a railroad in Willamette Valley, as already noted; also a bill appeared in Congress, as a forerunner to the Act of 1866—providing a land bonus for a railroad between Marysville and Portland. This act also led to the land grant act of 1870, allowing a land subsidy, this time for a railroad from Portland to McMinnville and Astoria.

We need not narrate the long controversy between the rival

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"East Side" and the "West Side" railroad companies, to each of which was assigned one of these two land grants. In this controversy Astoria citizens took active part. They hoped that the second grant would enable them to secure connections with the Central Pacific, from Winnemucca via Klamath Lakes, Pengra Pass, Eugene and McMinnville. They incorporated the Astoria & Winnemucca Railroad in 1870, to connect with the Pengra route (Oregon Branch Pacific Railroad) and began surveys (Oregonian, May 17, 1898). But they were doomed to disappointment. The East Side Company, controlled by Ben Holladay, absorbed the West Side Company (August 15, 1870), thus bottling up the West Side Astoria project; later in the year, the Astoria effort for a land grant between Eugene and Winnemucca (Oregon Branch Pacific Railroad) was foiled in Congress by Senator George H. Williams, who caused the proposed land grant route to be directed via Rogue River; whereupon the whole scheme in Congress and elsewhere collapsed. Senator Williams' reasons were two: First, the Astoria-Eugene-Winnemucca route, he thought, would damage or ruin the Holladay line, then building toward California, for which much money had been expended (finished from Portland to Salem September 28, 1870); second, he believed that, if successful, the new project would certainly halt the Holladay road at Eugene, thus depriving Umpqua and Rogue River valleys—populous areas—of railroad connections. Moreover, the Legislature in 1870, by joint resolution, called upon Congress to sustain the Rogue River routing and the "Williams Amendment" (Session Laws, p. 180.)

Much bitterness, political and personal, followed this action of Senator Williams. Joseph Gaston, leading promoter of the West Side-Astoria-Winnemucca route, insisted up to the last days of his life that, but for this action, his railroad would certainly have been built, that Oregon would have had short connections with the Union Pacific, instead of by Holladay's round-about line to Sacramento, that Astoria would have had a railroad twenty years sooner, and that Oregon would have

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been stimulated to a much more rapid development. But Mr. Gaston's optimism was always somewhat exuberant; he was ever playing to "hard luck" with his railroad rivals and theirs was usually the mastery; his Oregon Central schemes were always just about to be financed when they fell through; his Astoria-Winnemucca enterprise may have been likewise ready, as he said it was, or it may not. But it should go down in history that Oregon wished this railroad and Holladay's both routed through Rogue River Valley, and wished not to imperil the Holladay road for the sake of the dubious Gaston scheme, as is evidenced by the joint resolution of the Legislature of 1870, and that Senator Williams was actuated by high-minded motives, in this matter as in others, of his distinguished and honorable career. It should be added, however, that the Winnemucca route would have afforded Oregon as a whole more direct connections, probably more satisfactory and more promotive of progress, than the Holladay line did. It would have eliminated Oregon's dependence on California, which during many years, retarded the growth of this commonwealth.

Ben Holladay, Oregon's first great builder of railroads, now had at his disposal a large land bounty for the line from Portland to Astoria. He was at the height of his power in 1870-3, in which period he built the East Side road to Roseburg and the West Side road to Yamhill River, near McMinnville. He had not the financial means, however, to build to Astoria; moreover, the time was too early for the land grant to develop much value for mortgage and bonding uses. He caused surveys to be made; that was all. His plans fell in 1874 and his active career ended.

Holladay's successor, Henry Villard, Oregon's greatest railroad builder, extended Holladay's lines to Ashland and Corvallis, built the Columbia River line of the O. R. & N. east of Portland, and finished the Northern Pacific—but neglected the Astoria road. In Villard's opinion the latter road was not essential; the Columbia River channel to Portland was cheaper for transport and shortened railroad construction mileage. It

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may be added that Columbia River history thus far has vindicated his idea that ocean ships will sail as far inland as possible, regardless of seaward railroads paralleling the river channel.

Villard did more than "neglect" the Astoria railroad. His headship of the Oregon & California (Portland-Roseburg and Portland-McMinnville lines) which Holladay relinquished to him, required him to resist a Huntington project for connections with the Central Pacific at Reno or Winnemucca via Pengra Pass, Eugene, the "narrow gauge" "Scotch" road of William Reid's to Astoria—this in 1881. Villard throttled this project in May, 1881, by leasing the narrow gauge road from its owners in Dundee, Scotland, through secret negotiations carried on by J. B. Montgomery, at the very time that William Reid was trying to effect a lease with Collis P. Huntington, head of the Central Pacific and Southern Pacific. At this time, Huntington had no road in Oregon, and was evidently looking for an entrance into this state. Villard held the Oregon and California Railroad—East Side and West Side lines—in alliance with the O. R. & N. and Northern Pacific. Huntington was understood to be projecting a narrow gauge road north from Reno, on the Central Pacific, to Goose Lake, in Oregon, with probable further extension, via Pengra Pass to Eugene, Portland and Astoria. Naturally, this project would unite with the narrow gauge lines which Reid was building, Portland-Airlie (West Side) and Portland-Coburg (East Side), and which were giving Villard anxiety. This narrow gauge in Oregon had been started in 1878 by Joseph Gaston, who built it between Dayton and Sheridan, with a branch to Dallas. The Astorians had in mind to connect with this Gaston road and push it forward to connect with the Central Pacific at Winnemucca, for which they incorporated, May 8, 1879, the Astoria and Winnemucca Railroad, pursuing their earlier project of 1870. The Oregon Legislature offered in 1874, for the Winnemucca-Columbia river line (via Goose Lake, Sprague River, Middle Fork of Willamette River, Springfield and Portland) free right of way through all State lands (Act of

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October 24, 1874; session laws, page 15). The project was then promoted by the Oregon Central Pacific Railway Company, of Oregon, incorporated September 16, 1874. The Legislature renewed this offer in 1880, to the Astoria and Winnemucca Railway Company (session laws, page 55). These tenders lapsed. The "narrow gauge," construction of which began in 1878 under Gaston, pursued, in Willamette Valley, the Winnemucca idea of 1870 and 1874. In 1880 William Reid, representing Scotch buyers, rescued the Gaston road from bankruptcy, extended it in 1880-81 south to Airlie and north to Dundee, near Portland, and built a new line from Willamette River near Woodburn, south to Coburg (both lines Southern Pacific since 1887). The project from its beginning aimed at Central Pacific connections and Astoria hoped to be its terminus.

Villard went to the wall in 1884, and in November of that year the O. R. & N. Co. repudiated the "narrow gauge" lease. The hapless Scotch system, run down and dilapidated, reverted to its foreign owners and to William Reid. Nor could the scheme of Central Pacific connections be then renewed, for Huntington was preparing to secure control of the Oregon & California—which he effected in March, 1887.

Thus ended the twenty-year-old plan of connecting Oregon with the Central Pacific in Nevada; never since has it been revived.

Astoria did not give up, however, in 1881, when Villard killed the narrow gauge-Central Pacific project; it kept after him so persistently that near the end of his regime, in 1883, he caused surveys to be run under H. G. Hurlburt. In September, 1883, when Villard came to Portland with the "last spike" excursion of the Northern Pacific, he found his engineers had estimated the cost of the Astoria line at $50,000 a mile—a prohibitive figure; whereupon he wrote to E. C. Holden, secretary of the Astoria Chamber of Commerce: "We must, therefore, abandon the project." (Oregonian, September 17, 1883). Villard was then at the end of his resources and could not build the Astoria road, however cheaply. He

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had already exceeded the available funds of the Northern Pacific by $14,000,000 and a crash was soon to break over his head. He finished the Northern Pacific from Portland to Goble—within 58 miles of Astoria, but at this time no extension to Astoria was proposed.

Then ensued a piece of folly at Astoria. Citizens of that town were incensed by the long lethargy of Holladay and Villard; they bethought them to spur action or take reprisal by repeal of the unused land grant. This they believed would bring Villard up with a round turn, and force him to build quickly. They memorialized Congress for the repeal (Oregonian, December 6, 1883), and Oregon's Representative in Congress, M. C. George, introduced the repealing measure. The Legislature of Oregon memorialized Congress in 1882, urging the repeal. The bill passed a year later, in January, 1885. Loss of this bonus delayed the Astoria railroad by a decade. Unaided thereafter by the Government, Astoria citizens had to make up a bounty out of their own pockets. Accordingly, in 1887 they offered a bonus of $150,000. This marked the beginning of the new and finally successful period of the Astoria project.

II.

Now at last Astoria citizens resolved to do for themselves; they had leaned on Holladay and Villard and got unfulfilled promises. Portland was the meeting point of the transcontinental Northern Pacific and Union Pacific and the ocean-going ships of the Columbia River since 1883-4; now (1887) the Astoria men made up their minds they would bring that meeting point nearer the sea—to Astoria—in their view, the logical place.

They could not build the 100-mile railroad themselves; they had not the $2,000,000 for that. But they could put up one-tenth that sum as a cash bounty, although such money meant to them big sacrifice; it was a large sum and Astoria was a small town. Furthermore, they would form their own company, give it a start and hand it over to capitalists who could carry it through.

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So they formed the Astoria & South Coast Railway in August, 1888; incorporators, M. J. Kinney, W. W. Parker, J. W. Conn, E. A. Noyes, M. C. Crosby, H. B. Parker and James Taylor. Branches were to run to Tillamook, perhaps to Salem or Albeny; connections were proposed with an ambitious company known as Salem, Tillamook & Astoria Railroad, incorporated January 9, 1889, by John G. Wright, I. A. Manning, W. F. Boothby, B. S. Cook, J. W. Maxwell. Astoria pledged a bonus of $175,000. The route was to run southward along Clatsop Beach, up Lewis and Clark River, across the mountain divide to Nehalem River, thence to Forest Grove or Hillsboro. The Astoria & South Coast drove its "first spike" at Skipanon May 11, 1889.

The Astorians were delighted, at this juncture, to receive, as their builder and financier, the man who had constructed the "narrow gauge" for the Dundee capitalists, and who had almost brought Huntington in 1881 into the Winnemucca-Astoria scheme—William Reid. They made him president of their company, forthwith, in June, 1889. By this time ten miles of roadbed was graded south of Spikanon, under Henry B. Thielsen, engineer (Oregonian, May 26; June 7, 1889). The road was to be finished by September 15, 1891, to a junction with the Southern Pacific, in Washington or Yamhill County (Oregonian, June 15, 1889). Reid selected Hillsboro as the junction point (Oregonian, September 6, 1889; October 11, 1889). His engineers were E. E. Cooper and R. A. Habersham. Construction began at Hillsboro in November, 1889, and at Astoria in December, 1889. Reid was supposed to have the support of Huntington, and as Reid later wrote in The Oregonian (June 27, 1891). Reid supposed so, too. The project was stimulated by possibility of an alliance with the Oregon Pacific (Yaquina Railroad, then building in Cascade Mountains toward Eastern Oregon, through Santiam Pass) and some transcontinental line—either Union Pacific or Northern Pacific, which were in sharp rivalry. The Astorians hoped to connect with this parent railroad of the Yaquina line. They were encouraged also by incorporation of several companies

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which seemed subsidiaries of the unseen railroad that was seeking an outlet by the Yaquina route—the Albany & Astoria Railway, J. L. Cowan, president, for which surveys were carried on in the summer of 1890 under W. B. Barr (Oregonian, November 17, 1889), and the Salem, Astoria & Eastern Railway, headed at Salem by H. W. Cottle, E. M. Waite, Squire Farrar, William England, H. J. Minthorn, J. H. Albert, J. A. Baker, J. O. Wilson. For a Tillamook connection, the Astoria Seashore & Eastern was incorporated March 15, 1890, by W. H. Smith, Oliver Stewart, E. C. Jeffers, D. N. Stewart and George Eckler. Each of these companies had flimsy backing; the Albany and the Salem schemes came to naught; the Yaquina road soon went into bankruptcy and Reid's Astoria Company shortly fell into financial difficulties and halted. Reid had failed to bring in the "outside capital;" he could not "float" the bonds in New York, and his Scotch friends of Dundee had had enough experience in the "narrow gauge."

First of Reid's efforts was enlistment of Huntington in the enterprise. Nearly three years had elapsed since Huntington acquired the Oregon & California lines in Oregon and the Southern Pacific chief was interested in Reid's proposals and took a six months' option after May 6, 1890, to buy the Astoria & South Coast. His terms were: The Astorians to pay off the $175,000 claims against their company and turn it over to him, together with a $200,000 bonus, terminal facilities at Astoria and the Seaside branch line (finished by Reid in July, 1890, between Young's Bay and Seaside); Huntington was to put up a preliminary $60,000 to complete the Seaside line. The six months were to enable him to make survey of the route and verify the Astoria estimates of cost. Huntington attended the negotiations at Astoria in May, 1890. The agreement dated May 6 (text in Oregonian, May 24, 1901, page 5), was signed by Huntington and by Reid, as president of the Astoria & South Coast, but was not confirmed by the directors of Reid's Company, and the deal fell through. It looked as if, before this juncture, a builder had appeared, Huntington, who would bring to Astoria what that town had

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long wished; Huntington was willing to build; the $200,000 subsidy was raised by Astoria citizens in twenty-four hours (Oregonian, May 8, 1890); Huntington supposed the deal consummated and put surveyors on the route in June, 1890, and promised by letter soon to begin construction. The Astorians approved the terms of Huntington, but wished to get rid of Reid, and in their pulling and hauling, lost Huntington. In commenting, eleven years later, on this fiasco, Reid wrote in The Oregonian (May 24, 1901): "Astoria never got its railway into the Nehalem Valley, via Hillsboro to Portland, I lost the $155,000 I had invested in that railway and Mr. Huntington lost his pet scheme via Nehalem to Portland."

Astoria thus lost a rich opportunity in the Nehalem country. This route undoubtedly would have brought larger advantages to that city than the Columbia River route did later; besides, the river route probably would have been built soon afterward, thus affording two railroads and the opening of much tributary country. This loss will always be a source of regret; it was unnecessary; the railroad was Astoria's, but for the approval of a contract which Huntington had signed and to the terms of which Astoria had agreed. And there was no man so able to build the road as he.

Much criticism and abuse were heaped upon Reid for what was called in Astoria his "grasping" nature, or stubborn resistance to Astoria wishes. But it is fair to say in his behalf, that it was his money, and only his, that carried forward the Hillsboro-Clatsop division, up to the Huntington negotiations, the amount as he later stated it being $170,000, some $15,000 of which was afterward regained (Oregonian, June 27, 1891; May 24, 1901). Besides, Reid advanced to the Seaside division $8,000 which was returned to him on his separation from the project in 1891. Reid's operations made a big real estate boom in Astoria, from which some of his critics "realized" handsomely, but others suffered losses in the resultant "slump." It seems at this historical distance that Reid was entitled to better treatment in exchange for his service in enlisting Huntington and in investing heavily his own funds. "Not a soul,"

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he wrote (Oregonian, June 27, 1891), "has ever put one dollar between these points (Hillsboro and Clatsop City) excepting myself." The loss to Reid was heavy and he never fully recovered.

After Huntington withdrew, Reid went to work to get other financial backing (Oregonian, May 31, 1890, VI). He turned to English capitalists. It was announced October 9, 1890, at Astoria, that an English syndicate had agreed to take $3,000,000 bonds for a subsidy of between $275,000 and $300,000 for payment of the first two years' interest (Oregonian, October 11, 1890). Their engineer, James McNaught, reported that the route presented no serious engineering difficulties (report in Oregonian, May 19, 1891). The plan was to build into the Willamette Valley; also to connect with the Northern Pacific. To finance the Astoria and the Willamette Valley divisions, Reid incorporated August 18, 1890, the Portland, Salem & Astoria Railway, Edward T. Johnson and J. H. Smith being the other incorporators.

The Englishmen failed to perfect the deal, however, and in January, 1891, Reid could go no farther, and dropped out. He had graded eight miles out of Hillsboro and seven and one-half miles up Lewis and Clark River (work described in Oregonian, January 1, 1891). Reid tried to keep the project alive by organizing a new company of his own, the Portland, Nehalem & Astoria Railroad, to which the Astoria & South Coast conveyed its right of way between Hillsboro and Clatsop City, upon which division Reid had expended his own money (Oregonian, June 27, 1891). It was Reid's plan to build the road independently of the Astoria interests, but he did not succeed. The Seaside division, with some $55,000 debts, reverted to the Astorians, and was kept alive by D. K. Warren and other creditors, until early in 1892, when it was taken over by the Schofield-Goss Syndicate, to be mentioned hereafter.

Astoria now turned temporarily to the Goble route, for which was organized in July, 1891, the Columbia River & Astoria Railway, by B. Van Dusen, D. K. Warren, Walter C.

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Smith, Benjamin Young, E. A. Seeley (Oregonian, April 23, 1891). Surveys were made in August, 1891, by W. H. Kennedy, who estimated the cost of the line at $26,000 or $27,000 a mile, for fifty-eight miles (Oregonian, December 7, 1891), to connection with the Northern Pacific at Goble. The Northern Pacific line from Portland to Goble, built by Villard, had been opened in 1883. Citizens of Astoria now made up a subsidy of 1,000 acres of land. To build the line, the Astoria Improvement & Construction Company was organized July 23, by J. H. Smith, Ezra and Walter C. Smith, D. K. Warren, Benjamin Young, H. G. Van Dusen. This scheme also collapsed; negotiations with the Northern Pacific were fruitless, and very soon the Nehalem route was revived by C. W. Schofield and George Goss, of Salt Lake, early in 1892.

These men had been in the Gould service in the building of the Rio Grande System, and it was a natural guess that Gould was aiming at Astoria for a terminus. They were received with great enthusiasm at Astoria; a subsidy was pledged, $300,000 cash and lands for right of way and terminals to the probable additional value of $200,000. As the Astorians had more land than cash and land was easier to get for a subsidy, the bounty raisers formed a special company to take the land pledged for the Goble project and convert it into money—The Astoria Subsidy Guarantee Company, incorporated March 10, 1892, by C. R. Thompson, George Hill, J. A. Fulton, G. W. Sanborn, James W. Welch and F. L. Parker. To the new projectors was handed over the Seaside line, which had been sold by the sheriff February 26, 1892, for its debts, $55,550. These debts the new promoters assumed (Oregonian, May 4, 1892). A new company, The Astoria & Portland Railway, was incorporated at Portland, March 16, 1892, by Henry Failing, T. F. Osborn, J. Frank Watson, Charles H. Dodd, of Portland; D. K. Warren, I. W. Case, M. M. Ketchum, of Astoria; J. M. Schultz and Thomas H. Tongue, of Hillsboro. Officers of the company were: John Sheehan, the New York Tammany leader, president;

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C. W. Schofield, vice-president; E. M. Watson, treasurer; George Goss, chief engineer and manager; H. Goss, superintendent.

The new project did not follow the Reid route to Clatsop City. It rounded Smith Point, at Astoria, crossed Young's River and ascended Lewis and Clark River from Stavebolt Landing (Oregonian, April 21, 1892). Some 14,000 feet of trestle was constructed round Smith Point and up Young's Bay, costing $90,000; seventeen miles of grading was built up to Saddle Mountain ready for the rails, a tunnel was started in Saddle Mountain—all this in the summer of 1892. Between 900 and 1,100 men were employed by the contractors (work described in Oregonian, August 21, 1892; September 26, 1892). The vigor of Schofield and Goss delighted the people of Astoria; now at last the pet railroad was assured; there could be no doubt; the builders had much money, perhaps Gould's.

Suddenly, in September, 1892, construction stopped. There was no money. Goss disappeared over night, nobody knew whither. Contractors resorted to liens. To finish the road $1,500,000 was needed. The awakening was sudden and rude. The project went to ruin. Its remains still lie bleaching in the rain and sun.

The Astorians were shocked, but not dismayed. They went to work on their subsidy again—to make it bigger than ever. They sent invitations broadcast over the land, to wouldbe railroad builders, announcing their tempting offer. In the ensuing two years "promoters," "agents," "capitalists" of many stripes and of high and low degree hied to Astoria to capture the bounty prize. Like heroes of mythology, they offered themselves as candidates for the venture and the fair reward. The Astoria custodians of the county were now wise in their generation and turned off the fortune hunters one after another—each time, however, giving a fair trial.

At this juncture a rival to Astoria sprang up—Flavel—"boomed" by S. H. Brown, Jr., L. B. Seeley, N. G. Read and E. L. Dwyer, who incorporated the Flavel Land & Development Company at Salem, September 1, 1892, to build a rail-

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road from Salem to Flavel via Sheridan and Tillamook; also to sell town lots on the peninsula adjoining Fort Stevens, where the Hill roads are now building a terminal for connections with their fast new steamships soon to ply to and from San Francisco. Flavel, from that day to this, has been an ambitious rival of Astoria, without as yet, however, upbuilding itself or trenching upon Astoria. Here the townsite company laid big plans for railroad terminals and shipping. Astoria was to be but a way-station. In 1897 a fine hotel was opened there, which was attended during the summer of that year by the "society" elite of Portland.

After the Schofield-Goss fiasco, Astoria reverted to the Goble route. G. L. Blackman and W. H. Milliken appeared and then vanished; ditto a so-called Astoria & Eastern Railway, incorporated November 10, 1892, capitalization $3,000,000.

A new pair of promoters arrived at Astoria, January 19, 1893—P. P. Dickinson and R. B. Hammond, of New York, accompanied by their attorney, Milliken. Hammond was said to be president of the New York & Long Island Railroad. On December 15, 1892, these men entered into a contract with the Subsidy Guarantee Company to begin construction of the Goble road before April 1, 1892, and to finish the fifty-eight-mile road before October 1, 1892. They were to receive a bonus of 2,000 acres of land at Astoria (Oregonian, January 14, 1893). The estimated cost of the line was $1,500,000. They were also to build from Goble to Portland, the cost of which division was estimated at $2,000,000 additional. Their supposed backers were William H. Steinway, of New York, the piano manufacturer, and John Hudson, a London capitalist. But like its predecessors, this project fell by the wayside and Astoria had to forget these promoters also.

Two months later William H. Remington and W. H. Wattis arrived at Astoria from Salt Lake (April 25, 1893) in quest of the golden fleece. Their backer was the same Hudson who had favored Dickinson and Hammond; it was even guessed that Gould had sent forth these two latest Jasons. Their scheme was to finish the old project of the Astoria and South

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Coast, which had been attempted by Reid and then by Schofield and Goss. They entered into a contract with the Subsidy Company to begin construction within ninety days after July 6, 1894. But in September Remington dashed the Astoria hopes by wiring that he could not proceed (Oregonian, September 2, 1893.)

But next month Astoria's drooping spirits were revived by J. C. Stanton and J. S. Smith, who came to Astoria, offering to build two railroads—both the Nehalem and the Goble routes —for a subsidy of 3,000 acres of land and forty-foot right of way through the river front of Astoria. These hopeful visitors had already formed a construction company in New York to do the job, capital $1,000,000. But they, too, soon faded away. Next came E. L. Dwyer, M. Robinson and St. John Robinson, who at Astoria, January 20-22, 1894, representing "English capital" said they could build Astoria a railroad in twelve months.

Shortly afterward a project of substantial promise developed, supported by the Union Pacific, and authorized by its Board of Directors. The general manager of the Union Pacific, Edward Dickinson, caused to be incorporated in March, 1894, to build the road, The Columbia River Railroad Company, by R. W. Baxter, general superintendent of the Pacific Division of the Union Pacific; A. J. Borie, superintendent of the Oregon Division, and E. S. Van Kuran. The capital was to be $3,000,000. The route was from Goble to Astoria and to Tillamook and Nehalem. Work of securing right of way began at once. On March 16, 1894, Baxter asked Astoria citizens to meet him at Portland to sign the subsidy contract. Financial depression soon ended the negotiations.

Another promoter, attracted by the subsidy, was Edward Browne, a New York attorney, who came to Astoria in May, 1894, offering to put up $300,000 to be secured by mortgage of the land subsidy and saying he had $350,000 in hand. But in June a more substantial offer came from J. C. Stanton and J. T. Campbell, professing to have $2,000,000 in New York for immediate construction and to be supported by large stockholders of the Union Pacific (Oregonian, June 22, 1894.)

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Next in line came M. Lutz and E. L. Dwyer, "representing French capital," and offering the Goble line. In September, 1894, Campbell, a Detroit contractor, took an option on the subsidy, but let it lapse.

In November, 1894, came the climax of all these protracted negotiations, in an agreement with A. B. Hammond, who built the Goble road. He was preceded by two parties of promoters, the one headed by C. T. Karr of Chicago, the other by J. C. Stanton, of New York; H. I. Kimball, of Atlanta, Ga.; John H. Bryant, of New York, and J. T. Campbell, of Detroit. All three parties were at Astoria together in November and negotiated with the subsidy company at the same time. Karr offered to put up $500,000 within fifteen days and $500,000 more within fifteen days thereafter, and all the additional money needed to build the road, with the subsidy trustees, but he talked too big and the latter declined November 22, 1894, after advices from New York. Soon afterward Stanton withdrew his offer, in favor of Hammond.

The way was now open to accept the terms of A. B. Hammond, who, with E. L. Bonner, of Missoula, was the most satisfactory of the prospective railroad builders. Hammond had built the Bitter Root and the Drummond branches of the Northern Pacific, and had supplied the ties, lumber and bridge materials for the Rocky Mountain division of that railroad. He had come to Oregon to inspect the Yaquina Railroad, a property that had cost $5,250,000, and which Hammond bought a month late, at sheriff's sale, December 22, 1894, for $100,000. Pending the sale he went to Astoria out of curiosity, or for information, and soon found himself launched in the Astoria enterprise. He told the writer twenty years afterward that he had made no plans to go into this enterprise, accepted it dubiously and then, on account of "hard times" and money stringency, wished himself out of it. Whereupon he demanded more stringent terms, in the hope that the Astorians would refuse them and release him, but they yielded and held him.

The subsidy contract with Hammond, as first executed on December 1, 1894, required him to begin construction not later

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than April 1, 1895, and to complete the line (to Goble) before October 30, 1896, and spend $50,000 a month. But shortly before April 1, 1895, Hammond returned to Astoria and demanded in addition free right of way from Goble to Flavel, sixty-six miles; elimination of the $50,000 a month requirement, and three years for construction. These new terms were granted with a readiness that surprised him. The subsidy, including 3,000 acres of land at Astoria and 1,500 acres at Flavel, was made complete by the Astorians July 23, 1895, and Hammond announced from Portland in reply that he would at once go to Astoria and begin construction. He praised the energy of Astoria citizens in these words (Oregonian, July 23, 1895): "The people of Astoria—every one of them—can stand up and feel that their individual work secured the road. I never saw such patriotism and energy. They deserve a railroad if any community ever did." To celebrate the completion of the subsidy a public demonstration was held at Astoria July 25, at which Hammond said (Oregonian, July 26-27, 1895): "We propose to give you value received when this railroad is built. It will be second to none on the Coast." A special excursion was run from Portland to Astoria on the steamer "Telephone" by U. B. Scott and L. B. Seeley.

Construction began in August. The engineers were T. H. Curtis and J. C. Jameson. In July, 1894, Hammond bought the Seashore road, which he finished to Astoria, August 3, 1896. Hammond's associates in the preliminaries—Bonner and Stanton, Kimball and J. T. Campbell—backed out, leaving him alone (Oregonian, December 4, 1894). Later he enlisted the aid of Thomas H. Hubbard and Collis P. Huntington. The company was called the Astoria & Columbia River Railroad. Hammond negotiated with the Northern Pacific a 99-year lease of the latter's tracks between Goble and Portland.

The "last spike" was driven April 3, 1898, near Clatskanie, and April 11, 1898, the subsidy committee rode over the line to Goble and returned to Astoria. They unanimously voted that Hammond had fulfilled his agreement and was entitled to the subsidy. Members of the committee in the party were:

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Alfred C. Kinney, president; J. Q. A. Bowlby, vice-president; B. Van Dusen, secretary; John C. Dement, F. J. Taylor, C. H. Page, J. W. Welch, J. A. Fulton, W. C. Smith, John Adair, George Hill, C. W. Shively, C. R. Thompson, E. A. Seeley, D. K. Warren, H. B. Parker, Gabriel Wingate, W. G. Howell, G. W. Sanborn, S. D. Adair, P. A. Trullinger.

On August 7, 1899, Henry Villard, who had opposed Astoria's ambition twenty years before, rode over the line to that city as the guest of Hammond. In 1899 the track was extended two miles from Flavel to Fort Stevens. In September of this year a rate war was started against the road by the O. R. & N. steamboats, and the fare was cut to twenty-five cents between Portland and Astoria. The war lasted twenty-two months, until June 1, 1901.

The road gained steadily in earnings with the succeeding years and grew in value, although it did not bring to Astoria the commercial lead that the city was ambitious to win. Extension to Nehalem and Tillamook was announced by Mr. Hammond July 25, 1906, and was formally authorized by the directors of the company October 22 of that year, with a further extension to Yaquina. But before the new project was developed Hammond sold the road to James J. Hill for the Great Northern and the Northern Pacific on December 19, 1907, the purchase price being $5,000,000. The cost of the road had been less than $2,500,000. This sale stopped extension plans. The road was later transferred to the Spokane, Portland & Seattle (North Bank Line) which has since operated it.

The first projected railroad—through Nehalem to Astoria—is not yet built. In 1907, William Reid made an unsuccessful effort to carry through his old plans via Nehalem and Lewis and Clark river. His company at that time was the Portland, Oregon, Seacoast Railway. His twenty-five year endeavor for a railroad to Astoria ended with his recent death.

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